

Soviet Shift Means Uncertainty in Bonn

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The Washington Post Foreign Service

BONN, Oct. 15—The fall of Nikita Khrushchev introduces a dramatic period of uncertainty for Germany and Eastern Europe, which may prove comparable to the confused months following the death of Josef Stalin in 1953.

The event, like so many in the Soviet Union, came as a complete surprise to West German and diplomatic observers here. Only this afternoon the West German bundestag was debating Khrushchev's projected visit to Bonn—which had been expected to take place next February.

And tonight, when the first unofficial reports of Khrushchev's resignation were heard, a Russian Embassy official insisted that the Soviet government and Communist Party were still united under Khrushchev's leadership.

Nevertheless, the abrupt change in Moscow opens up questions of the highest importance for the European heartland in which the Cold War began and in which it has been most tense. Nobody pretends yet to know whether Khrushchev has been overthrown from "left" or "right," or whether the new "collective leadership" around Communist Party Secretary Brezhnev and Premier Kosygin will seek to accommodate Peking or the West.

However, it is recalled here that the death of Stalin, and the temporary ascendancy in Moscow of Georgi Malenkov and the late Lavrenti Beria, did produce Soviet feelers toward a European settlement based on Russian withdrawal from East Germany.

Summit Resorted

These feelers lay behind Sir Winston Churchill's famous call on May 11, 1953, for a

Europe which have far-reaching repercussions:

- First of all, there is the question of the recent Soviet overtures to West Germany, symbolized by Khrushchev's projected visit. Will the new Premier seek to take up the invitation, or will the entire policy approach now lapse? The recent measures toward liberalization in East Germany, taken with strong Soviet encouragement, are generally regarded as a major component of this policy.

Meeting in Doubt

- Second, there is the question of the international Communist meeting called by Moscow for Dec. 15, at which Mr. Khrushchev apparently hoped to hammer out a common stand against the Chinese. Will the new leadership attempt now to conciliate Peking or to make a more radical break?

On this question hinged the internal politics of several East European Communist countries—where independence-minded elements have capitalized in recent years on the unsettled state of Sino-Soviet relations. There is, also the unique but usually symptomatic case of Yugoslavia, where President Tito had both supported Khrushchev consistently and been the most outspoken critic of Peking.

Third, there is the question of economic integration in Eastern Europe—represented organizationally by Comecon—and the Rumanian revolt against Khrushchev's attempt to achieve a bloc-wide "socialist division of labor." Since Comecon and its subsidiary committees and groups are in almost continuous session, and East European national economic plans have all been dovetailed to some extent with Comecon projects, developments in this field may well offer the first solid indications as to the policy of the new Soviet leadership.

Malaysia Gets Sirens

Reuters

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct. 15 Air raid sirens that have not been used since World War II have been tested and are to be installed on high buildings in the city and suburbs, a Malaysian government spokesman said today.

"meeting at the summit"—a call which the late John Foster Dulles turned down and which became academic when Beria was arrested some weeks later. Khrushchev later attacked both Beria and Malenkov for attempting to "abandon the conquest of socialism" in East Germany.

The new Brezhnev-Kosygin team may not be disposed to make any such dramatic offer, but it will in the immediate future have to make a number of decisions affecting Central